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Tunisia: There is an increasing fear among government officials in Tunisia that an attempt may be made to overthrow President Bourguiba in the next few months. A faction of the Algerian FLN in Tunisia is believed ready to cooperate with Egypt and the USSR and might find support among a growing number of Tunisians who oppose Bourguiba. Bourguiba recognizes his government's weakness as compared to the Algerian rebels and has for some months feared a coup.

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Cambodia - South Vietnam: In what may be a swift reaction to Cambodia's recognition of Peiping, South Vietnam has ordered marines to the vicinity of several small islands in the Gulf of Siam which are claimed by both countries. Cambodia may have garrisons on some of these islands, and action by Vietnamese forces in this area might encourage Cambodian acceptance of military aid recently offered by Peiping.

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French Tropical Africa: Leading nationalist parties in French West Africa consider De Gaulle's draft on new constitutional arrangements between France and its African territories unacceptable because it does not provide for a "truly federal" system giving the dependent areas the "right to independence." An African spokesman warned that acceptable institutions must be set up by the end of this year, or there would be no federation at all. Paris is generally resigned to early independence for Tropical Africa, but fears the effect an independence clause would have on the Algerian situation.

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DAILY BRIEF

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Peru: Communist-influenced groups have threatened a "nationwide mobilization of forces" to protest the government's violent dispersal of a Communist-led labor demonstration and the arrest of its leaders in Lima on 23 July. The government said it broke up the demonstration because it was aimed at the US Embassy as a protest against American actions in the Middle East. A rash of such demonstrations might provoke the military into taking over control of the government.

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DAILY BRIEF

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Algerian Rebels May Attempt to Overthrow Tunisian Government

The pro-Western Tunisian Government of President Bourguiba is in danger of being overthrown within the next six months, according to Tunisian Secretary of Justice Mestiri. Such a coup would be instigated, in Mestiri's opinion, by a faction of the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN) which is "now ready to cooperate with the Egyptians and Soviets to throw Bourguiba out." The several thousand armed Algerian rebels based in Tunisia are believed to be better equipped than the 6,000 Tunisian security forces --to such an extent that Tunisia borrowed arms from the rebels during the crisis in French-Tunisian relations in May.

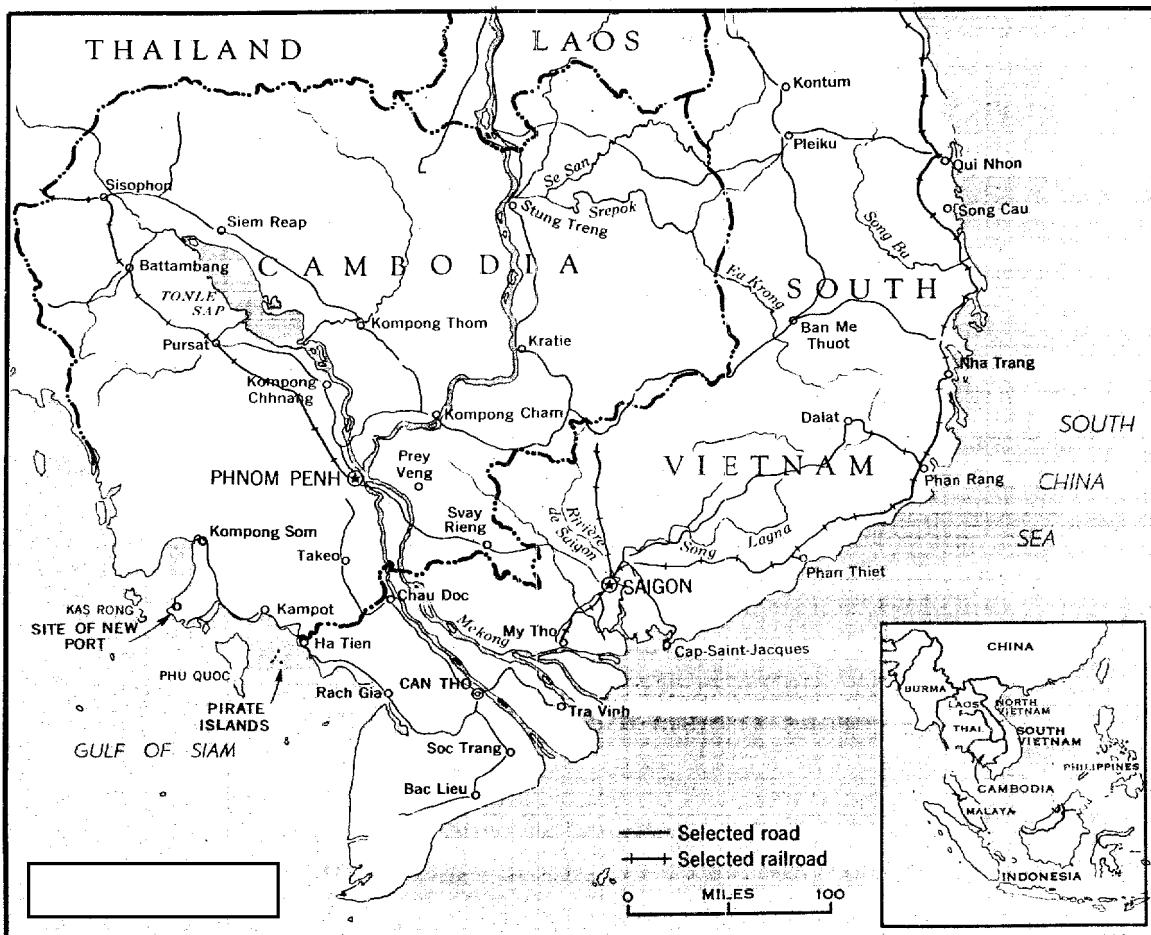
Were the FLN to act against the Tunisian Government, it might find support among a growing number of anti-Bourguiba Tunisians. Mestiri commented that the United States seemed to be losing prestige rapidly in the Middle East, and that this has created "intolerable pressure" on Bourguiba, who has relied on the United States as his principal support against his stronger neighbors.

Bourguiba has been vigorously attacked in the FLN press for having granted a concession to a French firm to construct a pipeline across Tunisia for the transportation of oil from the Algerian field of Edjele near the Libyan border. These attacks have heightened Tunisian fears of Algerian action against the government. Bourguiba also recognizes his internal weakness vis-a-vis the Algerian rebels and has for some months feared a coup.

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Vietnamese-Cambodian Clash Threatens Over Disputed Islands

South Vietnam has ordered Vietnamese marines to the vicinity of several small islands in the Gulf of Siam which are claimed by both countries and some of which may have small Cambodian garrisons. A company of marines, about 150 men, is to embark from Nha Trang on 25 July for the Pirate Islands lying off the large Vietnamese island of Phu Quoc; a second marine company has been alerted to move into support position.

Both Cambodia and South Vietnam are militant on the question of jurisdiction over several of the islands in this general area. Cambodia accuses Vietnam of seeking to block approaches to its new deepwater port nearing completion on Kompong Som Bay; Saigon views Cambodia's island claims as encroachments made more serious by Phnom Penh's accommodation with the Communist bloc. Clashes between opposing naval contingents have been only narrowly avoided during the past two years.

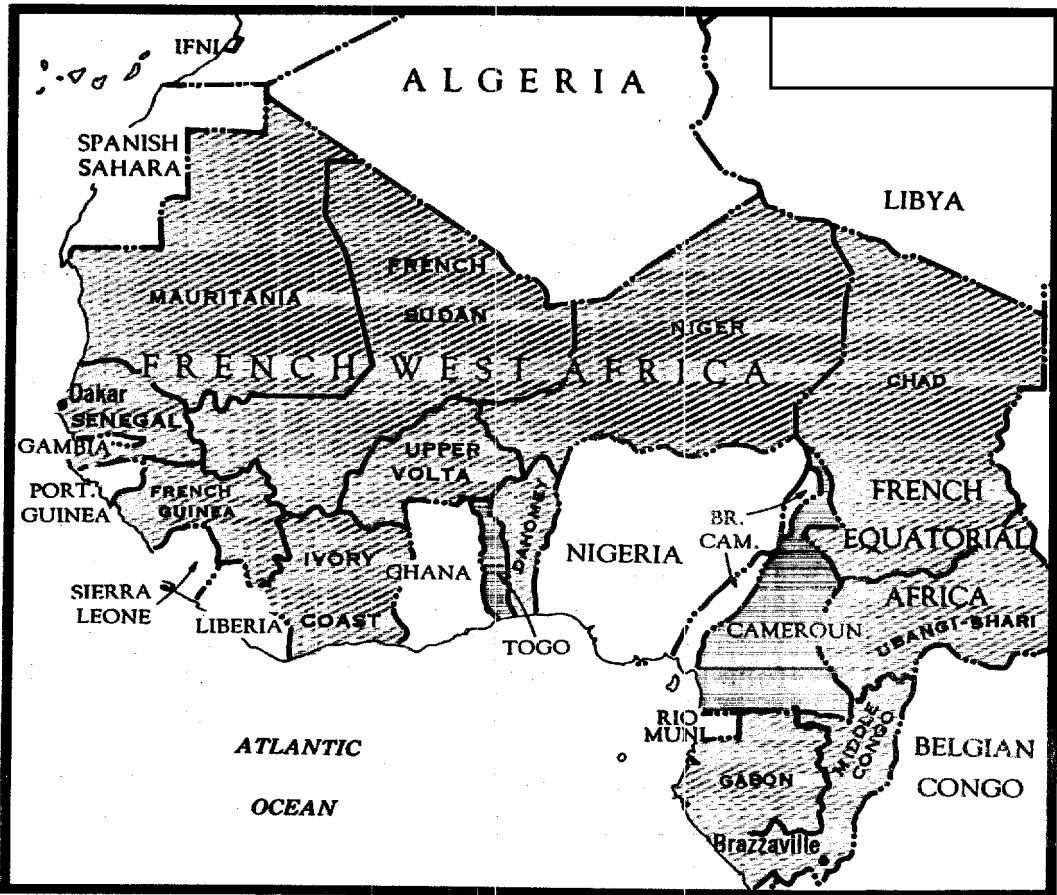
Any new move by Vietnamese forces in this region, at a time when Cambodian opinion is inflamed over charges of a Vietnamese land "invasion" last month, could create an incident and might encourage Phnom Penh to accept military aid reportedly offered recently by Peiping.

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African Leaders Oppose Territorial Provisions of Proposed Changes in French Constitution

Leading African nationalists in French West Africa consider those sections of the proposed French constitutional revision which deal with territories unacceptable because they do not recognize the "right of independence" for the colonial areas. The main nationalist parties in both French West and Equatorial Africa--the African Democratic Rally (RDA) and the Party of the African regroupment (PRA)--have identical views on independence, and although leaders do not at present believe that the African areas can afford the costs of self-government, they will insist on French recognition of their right to self-determination.

A spokesman of the PRA criticized the draft amendments as failing to create a truly federal system and strongly objects to the option to be given the voters at the forthcoming referendum. The draft proposes that the African areas may elect to retain their present status of overseas territories, vote to be integrated into France as departments, or opt for association in a federal system which does not provide for independence. The spokesman stressed that the federal program must be carried out immediately, and new institutions must be set up by the end of the year or "there will be no federation at all!"

Paris is generally resigned to early independence for Tropical Africa but fears the effect that an independence clause would have on the Algerian situation. However, French refusal to consider African demands would probably increase the influence of extremists and lead to an intensification of the nationalist effort--including the use of violence--with a goal of early independence.

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Communist-influenced Party Threatens Nationwide
Protest in Peru

Peru's Popular Action party--headed by non-Communist Fernando Belaunde but with Communists controlling several provincial committees--has threatened a nationwide "mobilization of forces" to protest the government's forceable dispersal of a Communist-led labor demonstration in Lima on 23 July and arrest of its leaders. Workers on Peru's only two important railways are already on strike and a general strike is threatening in the southern city of Arequipa, where Communist influence is particularly strong.

The government prevented the 23 July demonstration on grounds that the intention was to stage a protest before the US Embassy against American actions in the Middle East. Recent Communist propaganda and a Communist meeting of 22 July at San Marcos University have condemned US intervention in Lebanon. Communists are also reported planning hostile acts when US warships visit Lima from 3 to 6 August.

The stability of the Prado government has been doubtful for the past six months. Outbreaks of demonstrations throughout the country might convince the military that the time had come for a coup to restore the authoritarian government to which Peru has normally been subject.

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